

**IN FAVOR OF:
HOUSE BILL 5247
HOUSE BILL 5294**

**IN OPPOSITION TO:
SENATE BILL 249**

**TESTIMONY OF JEFFREY MATCHETT
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

**CONNECTICUT COUNCIL OF POLICE UNIONS
AFSCME, COUNCIL 15**

**BEFORE THE PUBLIC SAFETY AND SECURITY COMMITTEE OF
THE CONNECTICUT GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

FEBRUARY 28, 2012

Ladies and Gentlemen of the Committee, my name is Jeffrey Matchett and I am Executive Director with AFSCME Council 15, a labor union representing the interests of more than 4000 police officers in 62 municipal communities throughout Connecticut.

I am here today to speak **in favor** of the following bills before this Committee:

5294 - AN ACT CONCERNING LATERAL CERTIFICATION OF POLICE OFFICERS.

This Act is intended to clarify changes made to C.G.S. Sec. 7-294(d) last year by the passage of P.A. 11-251. P.A. 11-251 was intended to eliminate the need for certified police officers to satisfy entry level physical fitness requirements of the POST academy when they transfer from one municipal police department to another within the state. Following passage of P.A. 11-251, and despite a clear legislative record of the intent of the bill to eliminate the physical fitness requirement, the act has been interpreted to still require satisfaction of the physical fitness requirement for lateral transfers. This bill simply clarifies the intent behind passage of 11-251 last year, and clearly eliminates the requirement of passing the physical fitness requirements of POST for lateral transfers.

5247 - AN ACT CONCERNING THE PENALTY FOR ASSAULT OF PUBLIC SAFETY, EMERGENCY MEDICAL, PUBLIC TRANSIT OR HEALTH CARE PERSONNEL.

We support this bill because our members are regularly exposed to threats and acts of violence from members of the public, and increased penalties for assault on police officers should help stem the tide of violence against police officers. Over the last five years an average of 50 police officers have been killed by gunfire in the line of duty. In addition, hundreds of police officers are injured each year as a result of assaults by members of the public. This bill will help foster an awareness within the public that our

state will not tolerate assaults of its public safety officers, and ensure that our officers are granted the respect they have earned in the performance of their duties.

We are **opposed** to the following bill:

249 - AN ACT CONCERNING THE DISMISSAL OF DEPUTY CHIEFS OF POLICE.

We oppose this bill to the extent that some deputy chiefs of police are members of the bargaining unit, and this act should not be used to trump the rights provided to deputy chiefs of police by collective bargaining agreements.